Complaint against custom officers to Gaya Airport

2222. SHRIMATIBIMBARAIKAR:
SHRI NANA DESHMUKH.

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a group of Thai tourists has lodged a complaint of harassment and intimidation against customs officers at Gaya International Airport when they landed on a chartered Aircraft in Gaya last week; and

(b) whether as reported the tourists were holding valid papers and were carrying articles well within their entitlement?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRIANANDRAO VITHOBAADSUL): (a) No formal or written complaint has been filed either with the Airport Director, Tourism office, Gaya or the Customs.

(b) Yes, Sir. The tourists were holding valid papers and carrying articles within their entitlement.

Exemption of excise duty on 21'' TV sets

2223. SHRIMATI N.P. DURGA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether any request from the Government of Andhra Pradesh has been received in the Ministry for exempting Excise and Import Duty on 21" Colour TV sets supplied to the Government schools; and

(b) if so, what is Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI SHRIPAD YESSO NAIK): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The request has not been found to be acceptable.

Floating interest rate on Housing Finance

†2224.SHRI DARASINGH CHAUHAN:
SHRI ABU ASIM AZMI:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(a) whether the benefit of the floating interest rate by the Housing Finance Companies is not being provided to the borrowers to whom they had given the assurance for the same;

(b) whether it is a fact that for providing the said benefit these companies are collecting the additional money from -the borrowers which is not amongst the loan-conditions; and

(c) the extent of loans provided by SBI, HDFC, ICICI on the floating interest rate alongwith the earning through the collection of additional money from the public?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI ANANDRAO VITHOBA ADSUL): (a) and (b) According to the information available with National Housing Bank, most of the Housing Finance Companies (HFCs) are passing on the benefit of reduced rate of interest to the customers who had availed loans on floating rate without levying any fee/charge. In certain cases, few companies obtain a rate revision charge as a percentage of outstanding loan amounts to cover administrative costs, which is as per the loan agreement with customers being fully aware of the same. However, in case the customers who had availed fixed rate loans and subsequently desire to switch over to floating rate option, most of the HFCs are charging a conversion fee as per the loan agreement with the customer.

(c) NHB has reported that during the year ended September 30, 2003, of the total housing loan of Housing Development Finance Corporation (HDFC), 94% were floating rate loans. The floating rate housing loan portfolio in State Bank of India is Rs. 10,600 crore and no fee is being recovered for extending the benefit of revision of interest rates. ICICI Home Finance has reported that most of the loans currently being availed by the borrowers are on floating rates and no fee/charges are being collected from the customers for rate revision.

Fiscal Position of States

2225 SHRI P PRABHAKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have carried out any systematic survey to assess the fiscal position of the States in the context of the programme of fiscal reforms inaugurated some years back.